

REMARKS

Claims 1-3 and 7, as well as claims 4-6 and 8-18, remain pending, in an amended form for better presentation. New claims 19-28 being in proper form and not introducing new matter have been added. Reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-3, 7, and 19-28, as well as claims 4-6 and 8-18 being directed to additional species, are respectfully requested.

1. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 1-3 and 7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. Claims 1-3 and 7 have been amended to clarify the claimed invention. Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of claims 1-3 and 7 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, has been fully addressed, and the claims are now in proper form for allowance.

2. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Partridge (USP 2,821,799). Also, claim 7 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Partridge in view of Schoniger (USP 5,678,334). The Examiner reported that Partridge discloses a diffusion layer (4, 5, 6) formed between a transparent body (1, 3) and a semi-transparent body (2) and joined to the transparent body and the semi-transparent body to define a planar light emitter, as well as a light source disposed at least at one side of the planar light emitter. The Examiner also reported that Schoniger teaches that the light source comprises an LED. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections.

Independent claim 1 of the claimed invention recites, a planar light-emitting device comprising a transparent body, a semi-transparent body, and a diffusion layer, the transparent

body and the semi-transparent body being joined to form the diffusion layer therebetween. On the other hand, Partridge discloses a sheet 2 being mostly covered by an opaque coating 6, where uncovered parts of the sheet 2 are shaped as letters 4, figures 4, or windows 5. The Examiner characterized the coating 6, letters 4, figures 4, and windows 5 as a diffusion layer. The coating 6, letters 4, figures 4, and windows 5, however, are not a layer that diffuses light.

First, coating 6, which is applied over the sheet 2, is simply a coating to prevent the penetration of light. Thus, coating 6 is not a diffusion layer. Second, the letters 4, figures 4, and windows 5 are merely uncovered parts of the sheet 2, characterized by the Examiner as a semi-transparent body. That is, the sheet 2 includes letters 4, figures 4, and windows 5. Thus, letters 4, figures 4, windows 5, and sheet 2 are one and the same. Since the Examiner characterized the sheet 2 as a semi-transparent body, then the Examiner must also characterize the letters 4, figures 4, and windows 5 as the semi-transparent body. In short, coating 6, letters 4, figures 4, and windows 5 are not a diffusion layer.

Last, Partridge does not disclose that the sheet 1, characterized by the Examiner as a transparent body, and the sheet 2, characterized by the Examiner as a semi-transparent body, are joined to form the coating 6, letters 4, figures 4, and windows 5, characterized by the Examiner as a diffusion layer, therebetween. Partridge only discloses that the sheet 1 and the sheet 2 are bonded together to cover and protect the coating 6, letters 4, figures 4, and windows 5 of the sheet 2.

Therefore, since Partridge, analyzed individually or in combination with Schoniger, which obviously does not supply the deficiencies noted above as to Partridge—the Examiner advised that Schoniger teaches the use of an LED for a light source, fails to teach or suggest all the features recited in the rejected claims, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 1-3 and 7 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) be withdrawn. Claims 1-3 and 7 are allowable.

3. Election of Species

The Examiner has reported that claim 1 is generic. The Examiner has further reported that upon the allowance of a generic claim, Applicants are entitled to consideration of claims to additional species, which are dependent from the allowed generic claim as provided by 37 C.F.R. §1.141. Applicants respectfully traverse the election of species requirement. Since claims 4-6 and 8-18 being directed to additional species are dependent from generic claim 1, allowance of claims 4-6 and 8-18 is respectfully requested.

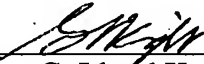
Conclusion

Accordingly, all rejections having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance. A Notice to this effect is earnestly solicited.

Applicants' counsel remains ready to assist the Examiner in any way to facilitate the prosecution of this matter.

Respectfully submitted,

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**APPENDIX**

**VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE**

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

The claims are amended as follows:

1. (Amended) A planar light emitting device comprising:  
a transparent body [made of] having a transparent synthetic resin layer containing no light scattering material;  
a semi-transparent body [made of] having a semi-transparent synthetic resin layer containing a light scattering material;  
a diffusion layer, [formed between] the transparent body and the semi-transparent body [by joining the transparent body and the semi-transparent body,] being joined to form the diffusion layer therebetween [having a sea-islands structure composed of a sea and a multiplicity of islands of irregular solid shapes provided on the sea in plan view];  
at least the transparent body, the semi-transparent body and the diffusion layer defining a planar light emitter; and  
a light source disposed at least at one side of the planar light emitter.
2. (Amended) The [A] planar light emitting device according to claim 1, [in which the planar light emitter has a flat shape and comprises two or more layers of the transparent bodies, and] further comprising  
a second transparent body having a second transparent synthetic resin layer containing no light scattering material,

wherein the first mentioned semi-transparent body is interposed between the first mentioned transparent [bodies] body and the second transparent body.

3. (Amended) The [A] planar light emitting device according to claim 1, [in which the planar light emitter has a flat plate shape and comprises three or more layers of the transparent bodies and two or more layers of the semi-transparent bodies, and the semi-transparent bodies are interposed between the transparent bodies, respectively, thereby providing three or more of the diffusion layers] further comprising

a second transparent body made of a second transparent synthetic resin layer containing no light scattering material;

a second semi-transparent body made of a second semi-transparent synthetic resin layer containing a light scattering material;

a second diffusion layer, the second transparent body and the first mentioned semi-transparent body being joined to form the second diffusion layer therebetween; and

a third diffusion layer, the second semi-transparent body and one of the first mentioned transparent body and the second transparent body being configured to be joined to form the third diffusion layer therebetween.

4. (Amended) The [A table comprising a top board on which the] light emitting device [of] according to claim 1, further comprising a table, the planar light emitter being [is] disposed on the table.

5. (Amended) The light emitting device [A table] according to claim 4, [in which the planar light emitter comprises at least two layers of the transparent bodies and the

semi-transparent body interposed between the transparent bodies,] wherein the table includes a surface, the transparent [bodies are] body being disposed on a side of the [an upper] surface [and a lower surface of the top board, respectively, so as] to illuminate [an upper side and a lower side] a portion of the [top board] surface.

6. (Amended) The [A] planar light emitting device according to claim 1, [in which] wherein the planar light emitter includes [has] a planar light emitter having a rod shape, [and comprises] at least a portion of the semi-transparent body being disposed at [least at a portion of] a cross section of the planar light emitter having the rod shape [thereof, and the diffusion layer exists at least at the portion].

7. (Amended) The [A] planar light emitting device according to claim 1, wherein [in which] the light source comprises an LED.

8. (Amended) The light emitting device according to claim 7, further comprising [A vehicle meter comprising] a meter having an element, the element being formed by the planar light emitter [emitting device according to claim 7].

9. (Amended) The light emitting device [A vehicle meter] according to claim 8, [in which] wherein the element of the meter [comprises] includes a pointer.

10. (Amended) The light emitting device [A vehicle meter] according to claim 8, [in which] wherein the element of the meter [comprises] includes a dial.

11. (Amended) The light emitting device [A vehicle meter] according to claim 8, [in which] wherein the element of the meter [comprises] includes at least one of a pointer and a dial.

12. (Amended) The light emitting device [A vehicle meter] according to claim 8, [in which] wherein the LED [comprises] includes two or more colors [of LEDs so as] to control a light to be emitted from the element of the meter [into a plurality of colors].

13. (Amended) The light emitting device according to claim 7, further comprising [A] a [side] step for a vehicle, the step including [comprising] the planar light emitter [emitting device of claim 7].

14. (Amended) The light emitting device [A side step for a vehicle] according to claim 13, [in which] wherein the planar light emitter [has] includes a [an elongate] rectangular flat plate shape [so as to form a main part of the side step], [and] the transparent body being [is] disposed on a [one thickness side of the] side of the step [so as] to illuminate a portion [lower side] of a door of the vehicle.

15. (Amended) The light emitting device according to claim 7, further comprising a [A] sound illumination device, the sound illumination device including [comprising] the planar light emitter [emitting device of claim 7].

16. (Amended) The light emitting [A sound illumination] device according to claim 15, [in which] wherein the planar light emitter [has] includes a ring plate shape, [and]

the LED being configured [is controlled] to emit light [in accordance with] based on sounds [of a speaker so as to illuminate the planar light emitter].

17. (Amended) The light emitting device according to claim 7, further comprising a [A] stick lamp, the stick lamp including [comprising] the planar light emitter [emitting device of claim 7].

18. (Amended) The light emitting device [A stick lamp] according to claim 17, [in which] wherein the transparent body [has] includes a tubular shape, the transparent body being [so as to be] disposed on an outer periphery of the stick lamp[, and the semi-transparent body is filled in the transparent body].

Claims 19-28 are added as new claims.